

Joseph Clark Presents His Views at N.Y. Meet

By William Bundy

Joseph Clark, foreign editor of the Daily Worker until he recently resigned from the Communist Party, spoke before about 125 persons here Sept. 27 at a forum sponsored by the Socialist Unity Committee. Until his resignation Clark was closely identified with the faction in the C.P. headed by Daily Worker editor John Gates. The views he expressed at the forum can be taken as representative of the present moods of many Gatesites.

"I stand for socialism," he said, but "everything is up for reconsideration including Marxism." Clark said he doubted the inevitability of war under capitalism and the inevitability of the socialist revolution. "For the first time in history," said Clark, "the possibility for a lasting peace has been created, perhaps by the 'ultimate weapon.'" He said he stands for "peaceful co-existence" between the U.S. and the USSR and for a peaceful transformation to socialism and he believes both to be at least possible.

BLAMES BOLSHEVIKS

He defended "people's front" politics while recognizing it as a revision of Marxism. The most

fruitful work of the Communist parties, according to Clark, was during the "people's front period of 1935 to 1945."

He said the growth of bureaucracy in the Soviet Union was in part due to ideological errors of the Bolsheviks, including Trotsky, and recommended a reading of Martov and Rosa Luxemburg.

Clark's speech was filled with glaring contradictions. For example, he hailed the break up of world Stalinism but said that the destruction of the Soviet bureaucracy would not be led by the workers. "It will involve pressure from below, but not revolution. As proof of this look at Hungary where the revolution was started by intellectuals and led by Communists," he said.

He also identified the concept of the united front of workers' organizations with the Stalinist "people's front" slogan. "The greatest failure of Stalinism," said Clark, "was the failure to oppose Hitler's rise with a united front. . . . But oddly enough, Trotsky, who was so right in 1933, was dead wrong in attacking the people's front against fascism in Spain and World War II."

Clark attacked Lenin's vanguard-party concept as a "monstrosity." He said all the exist-

ing radical parties in the United States were "obstacles to progress." He singled out the Socialist Workers Party saying: "They've developed their own dogmatism. It is true they were right on many things when I was wrong, but what have they got in their moment of vindication? Nothing but a pile of bitter ashes!" (He did not explain what he meant by that.)

He said that for the time being American socialists should discuss all points of view and participate in "progressive struggles," as individuals. He recommended reading Trotsky, and particularly Isaac Deutscher and two British magazines: the "New Reasoner" and "University and Left Review." In reply to several bitter questions on why he had failed to report anti-Semitism and other Stalinist evils in the Soviet Union after returning from there, Clark said: "I reported it as I saw it but I didn't see very well. I accepted uncritically what officials told me. I ignored some of the facts as coming from tainted sources. Science requires a skeptical attitude, and it requires that we deal with the facts, all the facts."